

Slide 1



Enhancing Work-Life Balance

Presentation by:
MHN Training & Development

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Participant Handbook

Slide 2

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Achieving Balance

“The key to keeping your balance is knowing when you've lost it.”

- Anonymous

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Workshop Objectives

- Highlight the importance of what you value most; your top values
- Identify areas of your life that are out of balance
- Capture action steps to create more balance
- Offer tips for navigating change
- Emphasize the importance of making time for yourself

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What Matters the Most?

“It’s not hard to make decisions once you know what your values are.”

- Roy E. Disney

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Identify Your Top Values

See Handout A: Identifying Your Top 5 Values

- Your top values reflect what is most important or central to your life.
- They should be relevant to your life *now*.
- Select your top values not because you think they’re the *right* ones or that you *should* select them, but because they truly reflect *what matters to you*.

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Wheel of Life Activity

See Handout B: Wheel of Life Activity

1. Make a list of 6 or 8 categories (or parts) of your life, in which you put time and attention
Examples: work, family, education, self-care, etc.
2. Place each category on the wheel
3. Rate how much time and energy you put into each area
4. Consider if your most important values are present in the areas where you are putting your time and attention
5. Identify the *ideal* amount of time & energy for each area
6. Identify where you would like to make changes

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Step 1: Identify Categories (where you put your time and attention)

Examples

| | |
|---------------------|--------------------------|
| • Family | • Education |
| • Friendship | • Recreation, |
| • Relationship | • Hobbies |
| w/significant other | • Religion, Spirituality |
| • Volunteerism | • Self-Care (health, |
| • Work/career | fitness, relaxation) |
| development | • Home Improvement |

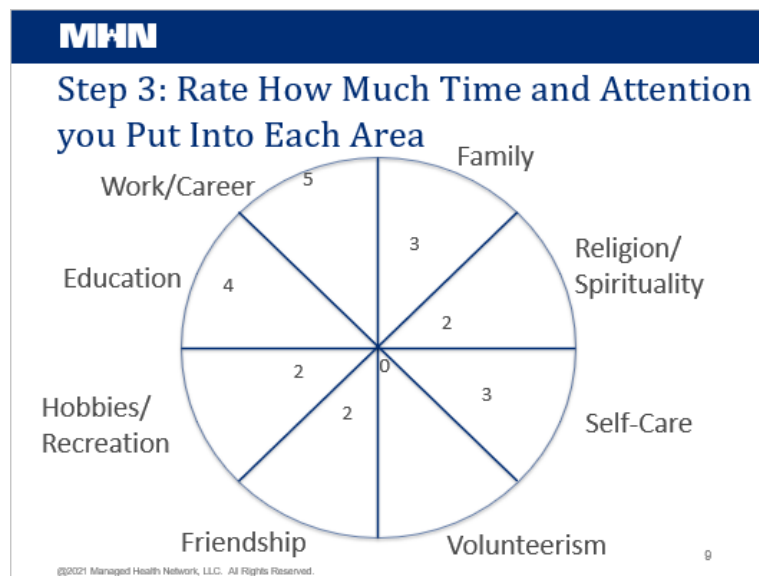
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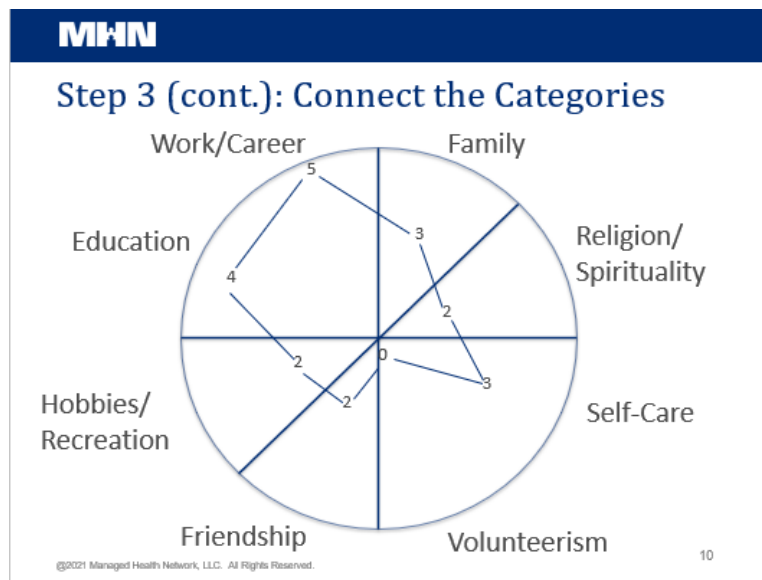
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Step 4: Reflect on Your Top Values

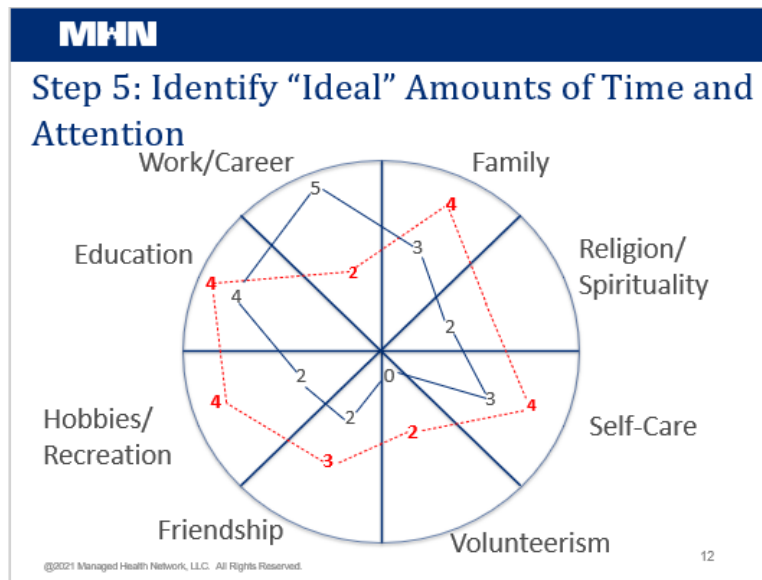
Look at your wheel...

- Thinking back on the top values you wrote down in **Handout A**, do you think that they are present today in your life?
- For instance, if one of your values was 'creativity', is that present today in your life? Are you able to be creative at work, or when you're enjoying time doing a hobby?
- If you would like to create more opportunities to have your top values present in the different parts of your life, write down any thoughts/ideas you have

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Step 6: Identify Gaps & Create Action Steps

- Which areas are you satisfied with, right now?
- Where are there gaps?
- Which areas would you like to put more or less time and/or attention on right now?

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Step 6 (cont.): Action Steps - Examples

Area: Family – “I want to have more time together”

Need/want to do: Have dinner together Mon-Wed-Fri

Action(s):

- ✓ sit down with family tonight, explaining why this is important and set expectations
- ✓ leave work by 5:30 on Mon-Wed-Fri nights

Area: Work/Career – “I need/want to exercise regularly”

Need/want to do: Walk 4 days a week for 30 minutes

Action(s):

- ✓ Use my lunch break Monday through Thursday to walk

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Be Flexible

- Reevaluate your values & goals
- Readjust your behavior
- Rethink your thinking
- Redefine your feelings

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Make Time for Yourself

- Meditate
- Exercise
- Get some sleep
- Get a massage
- Relax
- Be aware of the signs of burnout

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Ask for Help or Assistance

Make use of:

- ✓ Family and friends
- ✓ Co-workers
- ✓ Civic groups
- ✓ EAP services

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Summary

Work-life balance is an on-going process, not a permanent state.

- Remember what's most important
- Recognize when you are out of balance
- Take steps to regain balance

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Resources

Books

- Merrill, Roger A., Merrill, Rebecca R. *Life Matters: Creating a Dynamic Balance of Work, Family, Time, & Money*
- Carnegie, Dale. *How to Stop Worrying and Start Living*
- Sood, Amit and the Mayo Clinic. *The Mayo Clinic Guide to Stress-Free Living*

Internet

- www.members.MHN.com
- www.mayoclinic.com
- www.stress.about.com

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Handout A: Identifying Your Top 5 Values

Below are a list of words that represent values. It's not intended to be exhaustive. There may be values that are important to you that you don't see here. If that's the case, you can add them.

Circle those values that are *really* important to you, and from there, to narrow it down to those top 5 which are the *most* important to you, writing those on the 2nd page of the handout. Before you do that, please keep the following points in mind:

1. Your top 5 values reflect what is most important or central to your life.
2. They should be relevant to your life *now*. When we're growing up we often 'inherit' values from our families and other sources and we carry those values into adulthood. If that's the case for you and those values still reflect what remains most important to you today, great, call them out. If, however they have changed, then call out what is true for you *now* and for the life you want.
3. Select values not because you think they're the *right* ones or that you *should* select them, but because they truly reflect *what matters to you*.
4. If it helps consider, what activities, experiences, and/or people bring you joy and cause you to feel deeply engaged, connected or satisfied? The answers provide evidence for underlying core values.

| | | |
|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Authenticity | Family | Optimism |
| Achievement | Friendships | Partnership |
| Adventure | Fun | Peace |
| Authority | Growth | Pleasure |
| Autonomy | Happiness | Popularity |
| Balance | Health | Recognition |
| Beauty | Honesty | Religion |
| Boldness | Humor | Reputation |
| Compassion | Influence | Respect |
| Challenge | Inner Harmony | Responsibility |
| Citizenship | Integrity | Security |
| Community | Justice | Self-Respect |
| Competency | Kindness | Service |
| Contribution | Knowledge | Spirituality |
| Creativity | Leadership | Stability |
| Curiosity | Learning | Success |
| Determination | Love | Status |
| Fairness | Loyalty | Trustworthiness |
| Faith | Meaningful Work | Wealth |
| Fame | Openness | Wisdom |

List your top 5 values:

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

4 _____

5 _____

Handout B: Life Wheel

Step 1. Identify Categories (where you put your time and attention)

Start by writing a list of 6 or 8 categories (or parts) of your life in which you put time and attention. These are categories that are important to you, either because you enjoy them or because they are a part of your responsibilities, or both (*see a sample of categories below*).

For instance, in a given week you spend time working, and may spend time with family and/or friends, doing recreational activities you enjoy, spend time with a partner or boyfriend/girlfriend, exercise to stay healthy, etc. Perhaps you are enrolled at a community college, pursuing an advanced degree, or attend weekly church services. Choose from the examples below or come up with your own.

Note: It may be that the *amount* of time and energy you put into a given category feels like too much or too little; don't be concerned with that just yet. We'll touch on that shortly. But for now, just list the categories.

Examples:

Family

Friendship

Relationship with spouse/significant other

Volunteerism

Hobbies/recreation

Education

Work/career development

Self-Care/health/fitness/relaxation

Religion/spirituality

Home Improvement

Write your list here:

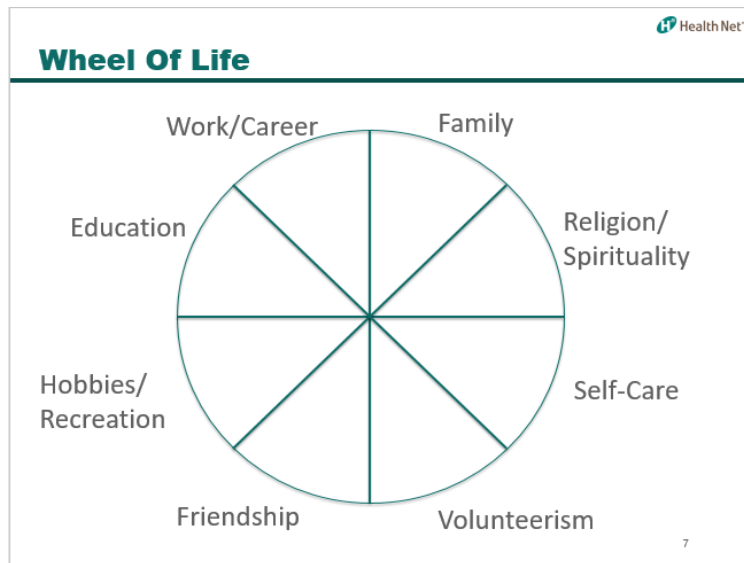
- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.

Step 2. Place your Category Labels on the Wheel

Using your list, write each category outside a section of the wheel.

To do this, use the blank template, on the last page of your packet, **Handout E**. Just separate that page from the rest of your packet.

Example:



Step 3. Rate How Much Time and Attention You Put into Each Area

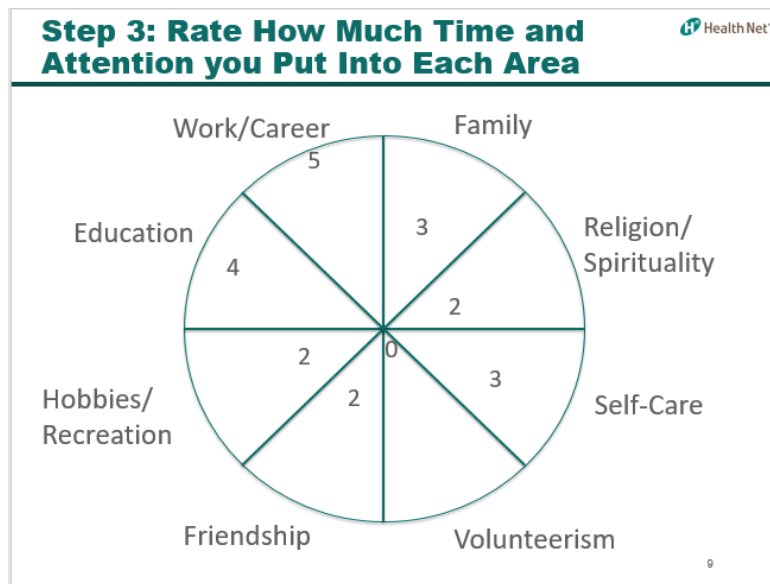
Consider each category and using the legend below, answer the question: how much time and/or attention am I putting into this area of my life?

0 – None 1 – Very little 2 – A Little 3 – Moderate 4 – Significant 5 – Excessive

Note: A '0' would be at the center of the wheel, whereas a 5 would be on the outside.

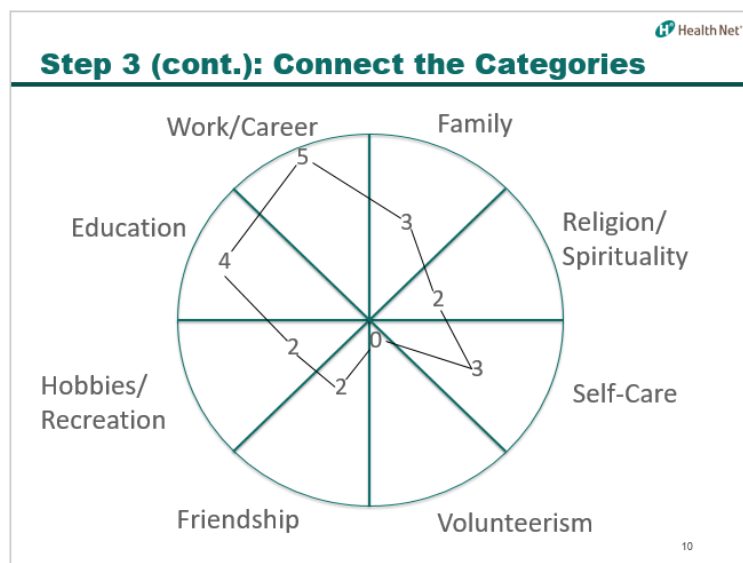
Using the same wheel, mark each score in the respective category.

Example:



Connect the numbers around the circle.

Example:



Does your wheel look and feel balanced?

Note: A balanced life does not mean maintaining particular numbers (3's or 4's for instance) in all areas. As we know, some areas need more attention and focus than others, at any given time. And inevitably you will need to make choices and compromises, as your time and energy are not in unlimited supply!

Step 4. Reflect on Your Top Values

Let's return to the earlier topic of values. Thinking back on the top values you wrote down in **Handout A**, do you think that they are present today in your life (look at your wheel)?

For instance, if one of your values was 'creativity', is that present today in your life? Are you able to be creative at work, or when you're enjoying time doing a hobby? Or what if it was 'contribution'? Are you perhaps, able to make contributions that feel valuable at work, or when you are volunteering, or ?

Consider how, and to what degree, your values are present in where you are putting your time and attention. Are you satisfied in this way or would you do you want to experience your top values as present even more in your life than you do today?

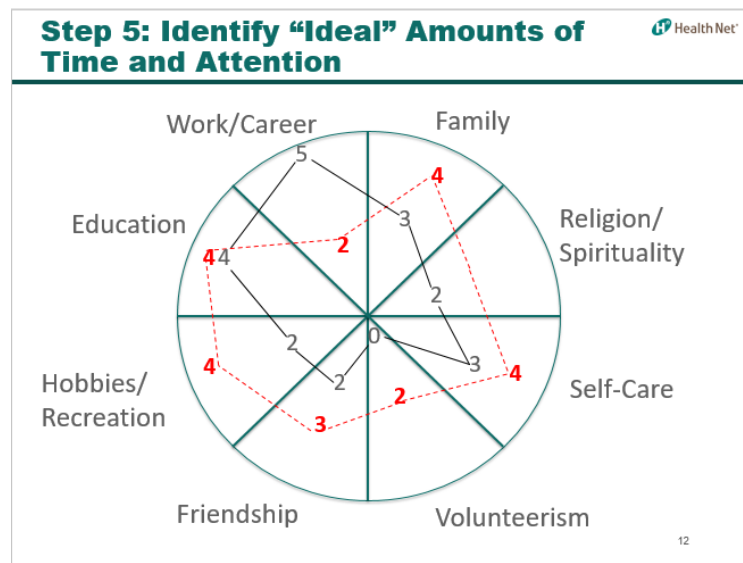
Jot down any thoughts/ideas you have about what you'd like to see and how you might create such opportunities:

Step 5. Identify “Ideal” Amounts of Time and Attention

Consider now, what would be your *ideal* amount of time and attention for each area of your life?

Using dashed lines, or a different color, or some other strategy, plot the “ideal” scores around your wheel of life (dashed lines are used in this example).

Example:



Now you have a visual representation of how much time and energy you currently put into each area, and what your *ideal* looks like.

Step 6. Identify Gaps & Create Action Steps

When you consider a desire to feel balance, which areas are you satisfied with right now? Which areas do you think you need/want to spend more (or less) time and/or attention? Write them down.

Next, identify any specific actions that you want to take to regain balance. They can be small and simple. The idea is to *take action*. Here are some examples:

Area: *Family* – “I want to have more time together”

Need/want to do: Have dinner together Mon-Wed-Fri

Action(s):

- ✓ sit down with family tonight, explaining why this is important and set expectations
- ✓ leave work by 5:30 on Mon-Wed-Fri nights

Area: *Work/Career* – “I need/want to exercise regularly ”

Need/want to do: Walk 4 days a week for 30 minutes

Action(s):

- ✓ Use my lunch break Monday through Thursday to walk

Note: The intent is not to obtain the ideal overnight, but rather, to take steps in the right direction; essentially, striving for greater balance.

In the section below, write down at least 1 action that you can take in the next week that would bring you closer to the ideal.

So, for example, if you rated Family as a ‘2’ (current) and a ‘4’ (for your ideal), list 1 step you can take during the next week that would bring you closer to a ‘3’? Have it be something relatively simple and most definitely, attainable. Set yourself up for success, not failure.

STRIVING for BALANCE

Area:
Need/Want to Do:
Action(s) Required:

Area:
Need/Want to Do:
Action(s) Required:

Area:
Need/Want to Do:
Action(s) Required:

Area:
Need/Want to Do:
Action(s) Required:

- Finally, transfer those intended actions over into your calendar or task list or smartphone reminder notifications; whatever you use to manage your time and activities.
 - If I'm committing to leaving work at 5:30 on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays in order to have dinner with my family, I would block out that time on my calendar now and perhaps for the first week if it's something new, and set up reminder notifications on my phone.
- If it's helpful to enter reminders or calendar entries for future weeks and months, then by all means do it. Whatever will help you to remember them and carry them out.

Handout C: Rocks

One day an expert in time management was speaking to a group of business students and, to drive home a point, used an illustration those students will never forget.

As he stood in front of the group of high-powered overachievers he said, “Okay, time for a quiz.” Then he pulled out a one-gallon, wide-mouth Mason jar and set it on the table in front of him. He then produced about a dozen fist-sized rocks and carefully placed them, one at a time, into the jar. When the jar was filled to the top and no more rocks would fit inside, he asked, “Is this jar full?”

Everyone in the class said, “Yes.” The expert said, “Really?” He reached under the table and pulled out a bucket of gravel. Then he dumped some gravel in and shook the jar causing pieces of gravel to work themselves down into the space between the big rocks. He asked the group once more, “Is the jar full?” By this time the class was on to him. “Probably not,” one of them answered.” Good!” he replied.

He reached under the table and brought out a bucket of sand. He started dumping the sand in the jar and it went into all of the spaces left between the rocks and the gravel. Once more he asked the question, “Is this jar full?” “No!” the class shouted.

Once again he said, “Good.” Then he grabbed a pitcher of water and began to pour it in until the jar was filled to the brim. Then he looked at the class and asked, “What is the point of this illustration?” One eager beaver raised his hand and said, “The point is, no matter how full your schedule is, if you try really hard you can always fit some more things in it!”

“No,” the speaker replied, “That’s not the point. The truth this illustration teaches us is: If you don’t put the big rocks in first, you’ll never get them in at all.”

What are the ‘big rocks’ in your life? Your children...your loved ones...Your education...Your dreams...A worthy cause...Teaching or mentoring others...Doing things that you love...Time for yourself...Your health...Your significant other. Remember to put these BIG ROCKS in first or you’ll never get them in at all.

If you sweat the little stuff (the gravel, the sand) then you’ll fill your life with little things you worry about that don’t really matter, and you’ll never have the real quality time you need to spend on the big, important stuff (the big rocks.)

So, tonight, or in the morning, when you are reflecting on this short story, ask yourself this question: What are the ‘big rocks’ in my life?

Then, put those in your jar first.

Handout D: Get Some Sleep

~ GET SOME SLEEP ~

1. Stick to a sleep schedule. Go to bed and wake up at the same time each day—even on the weekends.
2. Exercise is great but not too late in the day. Avoid exercising closer than 5 or 6 hours before bedtime.
3. Avoid caffeine and nicotine. The stimulating effects of caffeine in coffee, colas, teas, and chocolate can take as long as 8 hours to wear off fully. Nicotine is also a stimulant.
4. Avoid alcoholic drinks before bed. A "nightcap" might help you get to sleep, but alcohol keeps you in the lighter stages of sleep. You also tend to wake up in the middle of the night when the sedating effects have worn off.
5. Avoid large meals and beverages late at night. A large meal can cause indigestion that interferes with sleep. Drinking too many fluids at night can cause you to awaken frequently to urinate.
6. Avoid medicines that delay or disrupt your sleep, if possible. Some commonly prescribed heart, blood pressure, or asthma medications, as well as some over-the-counter herbal remedies for coughs, colds, or allergies, can disrupt sleep patterns.
7. Don't take naps after 3 p.m. Naps can boost your brain power, but late afternoon naps can make it harder to fall asleep at night. Also keep naps to under an hour.
8. Relax before bed. Take time to unwind. A relaxing activity, such as reading or listening to music, should be part of your bedtime ritual.
9. Take a hot bath before bed. The drop in body temperature after the bath may help you feel sleepy, and the bath can help relax you.
10. Have a good sleeping environment. Get rid of anything that might distract you from sleep, such as noises, bright lights, an uncomfortable bed, or a TV or computer in the bedroom. Also, keeping the temperature in your bedroom on the cool side can help you sleep better.
11. Have the right sunlight exposure. Daylight is key to regulating daily sleep patterns. Try to get outside in natural sunlight for at least 30 minutes each day.
12. Don't lie in bed awake. If you find yourself still awake after staying in bed for more than 20 minutes, get up and do some relaxing activities until you feel sleepy. The anxiety of not being able to sleep can make it harder to fall asleep.
13. See a doctor if you continue to have trouble sleeping.

Source medicinenet.com

Handout E: Life Wheel Template

